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SUBJECT: SOMALIA PIRACY: LETTER TO SC RELAYING USG ACTIONS
TAKEN PER 1816

¶1. This is an action request see paragraph 2.

¶2. Operational paragraph 12 of UNSCR 1816 requests states cooperating with the TFG inform the Security Council within 3 months of the progress of actions undertaken in the exercise of the authority provided in operational paragraph 7 of that resolution. Department officials working through the Interagency Maritime Security Working Group drafted a letter for signature by a USUN Ambassador to be delivered to the Security Council. USUN is requested to preview the draft letter with the other four members currently working with the TFG to combat piracy, namely Canada, Denmark, France, and Spain, at least twenty four hours before submitting the letter to the Security Council President. USUN should note to piracy partners, however, that the letter has been thoroughly vetted through the interagency process and will not likely be altered. USUN is instructed to deliver the letter to the Security Council President no later than noon, Tuesday, September 16.

¶3. Begin letter

Excellency,

As you are aware, in paragraph 7 of resolution 1816 (2008), the Security Council decided that, for a period of six months from the date of that resolution, states cooperating with the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia (TFG) in the fight against piracy and armed robbery at sea off the coast of Somalia may undertake measures in accordance with the provisions of that paragraph.

In paragraph 12 of that resolution, the Security Council requests states cooperating with the TFG to inform the Security Council within 3 months of the progress of actions undertaken in the exercise of the authority provided in paragraph 7. In response to this request, the United States of America is pleased to provide the following information.

For many months the United States has been working with the TFG and interested states on addressing the scourge of piracy and armed robbery off the Somalia coast. After the adoption of resolution 1816 in June, the United States approached all UN member states with which we have diplomatic relations to ask for their support in combating this scourge. We stressed that assistance did not necessarily have to focus on military assets, but could be provided in other forms, such as providing disposition and logistics assistance as described in paragraph 11 of the resolution. At the same time, we have approached interested states bilaterally and in connection with multilateral institutions, such as the IMO, the EU and NATO on how best to coordinate efforts to operationalize UNSCR 1816. We have been very encouraged by the level of interest in combating this problem.

In addition to these efforts to operationalize UNSCR 1816, on August 22, following a rash of attacks by pirates near Somalia, the Combined Maritime Forces in the Gulf of Aden established a Maritime Security Patrol Area (MSPA) in

international waters off the Somali coast. The MSPA is patrolled by three U.S. vessels as well as a British, French, and Canadian ship tasked with conducting operations off the coast of Somalia. The MSPA will act as a buffer area between the Somali coast and shipping lanes off southern Yemen. The task force has publicized the patrol area and advises all marine traffic to stay north of the patrol area when transiting the Gulf of Aden. This task force will patrol this area while the international community develops long-term solutions to prevent attacks. We are also continuing to encourage flag states and those with significant numbers of mariners, as well as those involved in the maritime industry, to redouble efforts in training related to evasive techniques, crew member safety, etc.

We note that, in accordance with paragraph 7 of the resolution, on September 1, 2008, the TFG provided advance notification to the Secretary-General that the United States, along with Canada, Denmark, France and Spain, are cooperating with the TFG in the fight against piracy and armed robbery at sea off the coast of Somalia.

In light of the ongoing international coordination and efforts to implement resolution 1816, and the increasing need effectively to do so, we anticipate the need for a continuation of the conditions that presently enable action against piracy as reflected in paragraph 7 of UNSCR 1816. These conditions were specified for a six month period which will end on December 2, 2008.

We look forward to continuing our cooperation with all interested parties to secure the safe passage of all marine traffic off the coast of Somalia.

Respectfully,

(signed USUN Ambassador)

end letter
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